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DTR-8922

24 AUG 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Annual Report of Language Development Committee for FY 1973

1. I have attached the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1973 of the Language Development Committee. The report covers the Agency's current language capability and the progress of the Language Development Program.

2. The Committee has set the following three objectives for accomplishment in FY 74:

- a. To compare language goals with current tested skills and advise components what training or recruitment must be projected in order to meet those goals.
- b. To study the effectiveness of the Agency's language training efforts in meeting the goals of the Program; and,
- c. To seek ways to enforce the provision of [REDACTED] on the Language Development Program which states that, "employees who are to be assigned to language positions and who do not have the needed language skills will be expected to take a prescribed amount of language training before assignment, with the understanding that they will [REDACTED] the required proficiency level during the tour [REDACTED]"

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As is discussed in the report, I welcome your views and thoughts you have about the Program itself.

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Distribution:

Alfonso Rodriguez  
Chairman,  
Language Development Committee

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
FOR FY73

1. Contrary to all expectations, this year's reduction in the size of the Agency did not seriously damage our language capability. The fact that it did not is an indication that the Language Development Program (LDP) is doing some good. The percentage of language-qualified (S-2 or better) personnel in overseas Stations has increased; the percentage of Agency officers with a language skill at the professional level (S-3 or better) held steady -- and increased in the DDO; and the number of people studying foreign languages remains high. On the negative side, however, our inventory shows that we are not replacing high level skills at the same rate that we are losing them. The list of languages in short supply (para 4a(4)) is growing longer. In sum, while there are indications of progress, there is still much to be done. Our gains may be the result of a generally heightened language consciousness in the Agency rather than of a well-coordinated plan to recruit and train personnel for future needs.

2. Committee Activities. The principal activities of the LDC consisted of monitoring programs already in progress and tying up loose ends. The following were three main areas of concern.

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a. Submissions of Language Goals. Although the revised regulation [redacted] was published almost a year ago, the change from a system of language requirements and waivers to a system of language goals is not quite completed. With the great changes in organization and staffing that took place last year, most components seemed to want to wait until the dust had settled before identifying their language-essential positions. We now have the components' language goals but will not be able to analyze them until we receive the next Language Control Register in October, when we plan to prepare a supplementary report. On the surface, however, it appears that the new language goals give a more realistic picture of the Agency's language needs than did the old requirements.

(1) Plans. The LDC as currently conceived is a watchdog committee that indirectly influences the development of language capability in the Agency by its reports to the CIA Management Committee. The responsibility for monitoring the assets of individual components and planning to meet their language needs lies with the components themselves. This is as it should be. And yet, we

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have no central body to look out for Agency language interests which do not coincide with those of an individual component (e.g., developing assets in languages such as Albanian and Armenian for which no component has indicated a specific need, but which we know are in short supply). Moreover, because of its singleness of purpose, the LDC is often better informed than the components about their language assets and apparent future needs. In his report of March 1968 on language training, the Inspector General felt that the LDC "should prepare guidelines for the operating components on planning language training and the preparation of language training requirements, ..." (p 8, para 14). Doing so would put the LDC in the position of advisor to the operating components on matters of language development, an activist role which up to now it has not played. I feel it is time to take that step, and have set the following objective for the LDC in FY 74:

(a) After comparing the language position goals and current assets of the Agency, we will advise components what training and recruitment will be needed to meet the goals. We will become even more than before the "conscience" of the Agency with regard to language development.

b. Clean-up of Outstanding Claims. After a third and final campaign to clear the record of untested language claims, we succeeded this year in obtaining a fairly accurate inventory of the Agency's language capability. Plans have been made to resolve the remaining claims of personnel who are currently overseas. In the last six years we have resolved close to 4,000 untested language claims.

c. Sanctions as a Tool for Language Development. Aside from recruitment, the language development problem is at its core a career development problem. And the LDC can probably do little more for the Agency -- now that the LDP has been established -- unless career planning for Agency officers includes planning for appropriate language proficiency. Toward that end the LDC studied the possibility of stimulating language development through the use of sanctions, i.e., requiring employees to attain a specified level of proficiency in a foreign language before being promoted to a stipulated grade. As I discussed in my memorandum to the CIA Management Committee dated 20 June 1973 on this subject, the LDC does not feel that the use of sanctions is the best approach to use at the present time. Nevertheless, many Agency middle managers seem content to meet their language needs without

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sufficient long-range planning. And faulty planning has resulted in ever-decreasing numbers of language-qualified personnel. We cannot afford to let this trend continue. If sanctions are not deemed to be an effective tool to reverse the trend, some other way must be found. The Committee has this problem under review, and will report its recommendations to you in December.

### 3. Current Language Capability.

*Read*  
a. As of 1 July 1973 there were [redacted] usable language skills (S-2 or better) in the Agency. Attachment 1 indicates that of CIA officers in grades GS-09 through 18, 16.1% have language proficiency at the professional level (S-3 or better); of DDO officers in those grades, 38.5% are qualified at that level. These figures do not include career agents or contract employees whose language qualifications are not listed in computer records; on the other hand, they do not reflect limiting factors either, such as the officers' age or likelihood of overseas assignment. It should be noted that although the number of Agency personnel was reduced last year, the percentage of language-qualified personnel held steady at 16%, while the percentage of language-qualified DDO officers actually increased slightly. 25X9

b. Language Capability of Overseas Stations. Attachment 2 summarizes the changes in the language capability of DDO overseas Stations. The figures indicate that in most cases the percentage of officers overseas with a usable language proficiency increased. Every person overseas with a capability of S-2 or better is counted. Most significant improvement was in the East Asia Stations. Specifically, the following observations can be made.

*Read All of This.*  
(1) East Asia. Although there was a reduction in the number of personnel, the percentage of language-qualified people at almost all EA Stations increased. This was not merely a statistical gain: the actual number of language-qualified people in most language units increased. Most significant improvements were in [redacted] 25X1A

The only decrease occurred [redacted]

(2) Africa. Except for [redacted] which showed a slight decrease in language-qualified personnel, all AF Division Stations improved or maintained their language capability. In many of the small Stations all personnel have a usable language skill. Only in [redacted] 25X1A  
[redacted] are there no officers who speak the language of the host country. You commented last year on the lack of language requirements in several African countries. The Division this year

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established language goals for four additional Stations but has not done so for [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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(3) Western Hemisphere. Generally, the WH Division maintained an already strong language capability overseas. Except for [REDACTED], better than 50% of the personnel in most WH Stations have a usable language skill. At several Stations the figure is 70% or better. There were slight decreases in [REDACTED]; increases in [REDACTED]

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(4) Europe. The Division maintained an already good language capability overseas and showed improvement in most Stations, though the increased percentages are generally due more to personnel reductions than to an increase in the number of people with usable language skills. The most significant real increases were [REDACTED]

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The figures imply that more language skills are needed in the [REDACTED]

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(5) Near East. There was little change in the language capability of overseas Stations in the NE area, except those brought about by personnel reductions. As in 1972, fewer than 50 percent of the officers in most NE Stations have a usable language skill. Significant increases are in evidence only in [REDACTED]

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There has been some movement during the last year to improve [REDACTED]

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#### 4. Trends.

a. Losses and Gains of Language Assets (Att 3). The overall number of language assets decreased in FY 73 but the losses were smaller than expected. In all, the Agency lost [REDACTED] usable skills (S-2 or better) through attrition. To offset them, 132 new skills were gained through training at the Language School, 93 came in through recruitment, and some were gained through external and overseas [REDACTED]

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With the exception of Hausa, Lithuanian, Luba, Pashto, Tibetan and Yiddish, all of the above languages are on Directorate incentive language lists. We plan to determine the actual needs of the Agency for all of these languages in short supply and advise the components regarding recruitment and training to meet future needs.

b. Recruitment. There was a slight increase in the number of language skills gained through recruitment in FY 73 over FY 72, but not enough to indicate a marked change in recruitment with respect to language qualifications. It is clearly cheaper to recruit language-qualified people than to train them. Moreover, it is only through recruitment that we can replenish our dwindling supply of speakers at the native and near-native levels. The 1973 Career Trainee classes were better qualified than the two classes in 1972 (Attachment 4), with more CTs qualifying at the 4 and 5 levels. However, the Committee wishes to reiterate its recommendation of last year that efforts to recruit high-level speakers be intensified.

c. Language Incentives (Att 5). Enrollment in the Language Proficiency Cash Awards program increased somewhat but the program is still small and focused on languages for which there is an operational need. Since the program began in March 1972, 384 employees have been participants, of whom 141 have received awards which totalled \$105,000. The largest enrollment (87) has been in Lao. Awards were given most frequently for proficiency achieved in Arabic, Lao, Thai and Turkish. From all indications, it appears that the program is continuing to achieve its aims.

d. Fitness Reports. In FY 74 we intend to survey the Agency with reference to the degree to which language capability is being reflected in promotion recommendations and fitness reports on personnel occupying language positions.

e. The Language School. The Language School continues to be a strong asset in the Language Development Program. It does its continuing missions of training and testing well, and energetically seeks new ways to improve the Agency's language capability. In addition to its main job of preparing officers for overseas assignments, it provides part-time familiarization courses for analysts who need to know a non-Roman alphabet, specialized reading courses in scientific and technical areas, short-term refresher courses to revive neglected skills, courses for dependent wives, and a variety of other little-noticed language training services. Never mentioned in our statistics

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are the numbers of people it trains yearly who do not add new skills to the Agency inventory but who improve what they already have or gain a level 1 proficiency for personal survival on a foreign economy. This fall the School is experimenting with a project that could be a partial answer to our need for more high-proficiency speakers: a one-month "total immersion" exercise in which 12 students at the 2 and 3 level of proficiency [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] speaking only Russian. If successful, we will run similar programs in Spanish and French. The School is also exploring the possibility of using video tapes of foreign television for language maintenance at the Headquarters building.

f. Testing. The Language School tested over 1400 employees for language proficiency last year, including all students who completed language training, all new employees, and all untested claims surfaced by our clean-up of the computer record. A survey of the Agency revealed, however, that there are few components that have a dependable system for testing returnees from overseas. The revised regulation states that all employees who have developed new language skills be tested when they return from overseas; this provision has not been successfully implemented and is a problem which must be overcome in FY 74.

g. Training. Language training during FY 73 continued at a high rate. Domestically, 775 employees were enrolled in Language School training programs, an increase of 88 over FY 72. Some of this increase is accounted for by the introduction of part-time courses in Chinese, French and Spanish at the Headquarters building. In addition, language courses were offered through external training to 64 persons, including eight at FSI schools overseas. The level of Station-sponsored overseas language training for FY 73 appears to have remained at about the same high level as the previous year, although all of the data are not yet available. It is encouraging to see the number of people in CIA who are taking advantage of the opportunity to study a language on their own time. Over 120 students attended language classes before or after hours; and the Language School's popular self-study program provided texts and tapes to over 700 people in 37 languages, a threefold increase over FY 72.

It is not enough, however, to count the number of people who were exposed to a language during the year. We do not need more people in language training. We need to train the right people and keep them in training long enough to learn the language. Toward this end the

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Committee has decided to take a hard look at our language training policies to see if we can increase the number of usable skills gained through training each year. We have set ourselves two specific tasks:

(1) We plan to study how well language training is aimed specifically at meeting the goals of the LDP.

(2) We will seek ways to enforce the provision of [REDACTED] which states: "Employees who are to be assigned to language positions and who do not have the needed language skills will be expected to take a prescribed amount of language training before assignment, with the understanding that they will achieve the required proficiency level during the tour of duty."

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LANGUAGE SPEAKING SKILLS<sup>1</sup> OF CAREER TRAINEE CLASSES

Levels	CY 72 Classes					CY 73 Classes				
	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
Arabic								1	1	
Cambodian								1		
Chinese			1	1	1		2 <sup>2</sup>		1	2
Estonian				1						
Finnish		1								
French		1		8	10		3	3	6	2
German		1	3	1	5		2	1	1	2
Greek								1		
Hebrew									1	
Hungarian					1					
Indonesian										1
Italian					2	1	1			1
Japanese					1					2
Lao			1					1		
Latvian		1								
Polish		1		1						
Portuguese		1						1		
Russian		1	1		1	1		1	1	2
Serbo-Croatian							1	1		
Spanish	1			3			2	5	4	2
Thai				2				1		1
Turkish					2					
Ukrainian		1								
Vietnamese			<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>				<u>1</u>		
Totals	<u>1</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>

<sup>1</sup> More than 20 claims of the July 73 class have not been tested

<sup>2</sup> One of these is Cantonese

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